

2. FUTURE USES OF FORMER FENDALTON LIBRARY

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Corporate Plan Output: Surplus Property	

The purpose of this report is to advise the Council on possible future uses for the former Fendalton Library.

BACKGROUND

Councillors will be aware of the new development at the Fendalton Service Centre which now incorporates the new Fendalton Library. The existing former library building is now vacant and there is a need to determine its future use.

The availability of the property was circularised internally under the Property Decision-Making flowchart with the Fendalton/Waimairi Community Board being the only respondent to express an interest in the building. The Board has undertaken a community consultation process which is detailed later in this report.

This site contains not only the vacated Fendalton Library but also a community hall that the adjoining Fendalton Primary School have full use of up until 3pm Monday to Friday. The hall is attached to the library building by way of a corridor; however the library space has remained with the inter-connecting access doors locked off.

This site was purchased from the Crown in April 1968 and contains an area of 2198 m². The hall built on the site is subject to an agreement which allows the adjoining Fendalton Primary School free and reasonable access and use during ordinary school hours. There is a clause in the agreement between the Education Department and the Council that states that the agreement shall remain for so long as the community hall is available for the benefit of the general public.

ZONING

Currently the library site is covered under the Waimairi District Plan with a designation as "Community Centre". Under this plan the underlying zone is Residential G. The proposed City Plan, which is the dominant planning document has the site designated for Library Purposes, while the underlying zoning is Living 1.

Given the very specific designation applying to this site, any new use proposed will require a resource consent. Whether any application is notified or non-notified will depend on the actual and potential effects of the proposal and given that this is a Council-owned facility, the resource consent will need to be considered by an independent commissioner.

COMMUNITY BOARD CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Board's submission for retention of the building for community use is supported by the results of a consultation process including a letterbox drop to more than 5,000 residents in the vicinity of the library. Advertisements were placed in the local newspapers with contact being made also with Fendalton Hall user groups and the Fendalton School Board/staff representatives. Submission drop boxes were also placed in the Fendalton Library and the Fendalton Service Centre. The following is a summary of the submissions received as outlined in a report prepared by the Community Development Adviser.

SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED

Organisations Seeking Individual Use

The following organisations sought the facility to operate and base their service from:

- **Mature Employment Service Ltd:** Area satellite office, resource and training centre. Organisation is a charitable company.
- **Canterbury Playcentre Association Inc:** Currently based at Wharenui School. Wishes to establish Association office, library and shop.
- **Christchurch Parent Centre:** Wishes to relocate support services. Association seeks office space, library, toy library, educational and activity groups, meeting space.
- **Fendalton Open Air School:** Wishes to develop an educational resource centre, special needs support venue, parent information centre and an after school activity service.
- **Christchurch Community Arts Co-operative:** To establish an arts co-operative, workshop, gallery and art/craft tuition. Group hopes to establish a charitable trust and operate the co-op six or seven days per week.
- **Early Childhood Resource Centre:** Seeks to relocate its services from Addington. Centre offers recycled, reusable and waste materials to a range of pre-school, school activity and school holiday programmes organisers.
- **Gerry Brownlee, MP, Ilam:** Is seeking the venue to establish an electorate office. (Possibly may not need total space that will be available).
- **New Zealand Society of Genealogists, Canterbury Branch:** Would like to relocate from Shirley Community Centre. Society offers its members meeting/tuition space, research facilities/library as well as a need to establish an administration centre.

In summary most groups would appear to require exclusive use of the facility. Of these, a small number would utilise the building outside business hours, including weekend use.

The Playcentre Association, Parent and Early Childhood Resource Centres and the Genealogists provide a metropolitan service. The Arts Co-op is a semi-retail activity as it would rely on income from sales of artwork to sustain the co-op. The Mature Employment Service would be offering a localised service to adjacent communities, as would the MP's electorate office. Fendalton Primary's service, while based around its school needs, would undoubtedly attract referrals from area schools or district use. It is not clear at this point what its relationship would be with the services offered through the Department of Education and such groups as the nearby College of Education.

Fendalton School

Note: During the submission process, Fendalton School's Board, via its home newsletter, encouraged school parents to forward a submission. From 21 identifiable submissions received, two points were made:

- (a) "ensure that the school's continued use of Fendalton Hall is secured";
- (b) that the library facility "be provided for educational purposes that enables support for families and children of our community to be maximised".

Individual Submissions

- **Arts Centre:** The following submissions received indicated the following arts-related needs should be considered:
Artists Studios (1), (musicians, artists work spaces).
Community Exhibition Centre (3), a venue similar to the Linwood Community Arts Centre which offers display/exhibition space. Also facilities to offer tuition arts classes.
Community Arts Centre (9), a venue for arts and craft tuition offering classes suitable for young people to adults.
Music Recitals/Cabaret/Theatre/Drama Venue (3), a small scale venue to allow the above to take place.
- **Museum and Model Centre:** Two similar submissions sought the establishment of a model museum, particularly facilities to allow model making including tuition. Also to allow model clubs to provide displays of their craft.

- **Retention as a Community Centre:** A number of submissions (25 – with multiple responses) asked that the facility be retained for general community use. It was suggested that such use could be:
Social support groups; community educational programmes; yoga; activity programmes for pre-schoolers, young people and adults; public meeting venue; lecture facility; religious use; exercise/aerobics programme; reception/wedding venue; convention/conference (in conjunction with Fendalton Hall).
- **Coaching, Tuition, Education Studio:** Several submissions (5) were made suggesting it would be an appropriate venue to establish studios for tutors, offering coaching learning opportunities in:
ESOL; children’s reading recovery; additional children’s curriculum learning; music; dance.
- **Passive Activity Venue for Young People:** General submissions (4) sought to have an out of school care programme established in the venue or an after school activity centre offering creative activities and table games. The suggested age range of this group is 14 to 18 year olds.
- **Meeting Venue:** A number of submissions (6) that included the following groups:
Christchurch Newcomers Language Class; The Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the Christchurch Ladies Probus Club would like to see a suitable meeting facility established.
- **Computer Centre:** Several submissions (4) sought the establishment of computer services with access to e-mail and the internet. One suggested an over 50s technology centre with tuition and club format operating.
- **Miscellaneous Submissions:** Adventure Playground for over 60s; family counselling; café/coffee shop/bar/restaurant; community constable’s office; fitness gym; day care centre elderly; gift the facility/hall to Fendalton School; pre-school centre; sports centre.

VALUATION DETAILS

The market value of the property has been assessed by independent valuation on the basis of adding the depreciated cost of improvements to the land value:

Land as vacant (whole site)	\$550,000
Library building (only) -depreciated cost	\$260,000

Total Value	\$810,000

COMMUNITY FACILITIES STUDY

In addition to the community consultation that has been undertaken specifically in relation to this building, a major needs analysis study is currently being undertaken to identify the need for community facilities in the Papanui and Fendalton/Waimairi wards.

A draft evaluation report has been presented to the working party identifying the current facilities available. There is to be ongoing work to be completed with regard to this study which complicates the issue with regard to considering now whether this property is surplus to requirements.

ALTERNATIVE USES

This building has been purpose-built specifically for a library and community hall. Properties of this type are not generally traded in the marketplace, or occupied under normal commercial leasing arrangements. Given the constraints of the zoning, potential difficulties in utilising the premises for commercial type activity would arise if those activities generate a large number of traffic movements, particularly considering the proximity of the adjoining Fendalton Primary School site.

SUMMARY

It can clearly be seen from this report that there is strong community interest in the retention of this building by the Council for some form of community activity.

Subdivision of the vacated library building is not possible without reasonably substantial construction work for fire walls, as it is connected to the community hall on the site and all buildings are contained within the one title.

The Deed of Agreement between the Department of Education and the Council with regard to the use the Fendalton Primary School makes of the community hall also prohibits the Council from dealing with the library building in isolation without consultation with the Department of Education to vary the existing agreement.

An extensive community consultation process has been undertaken and the Fendalton/Waimairi Community Board supports the Fendalton Advocacy Team's recommendation that the building be retained as part of the Fendalton Hall for "predominantly community use". For this and the other reasons outlined in this report, it is the Property Unit's opinion that it is not possible to consider this building from a surplus perspective and setting aside this building for a community activity is the most appropriate action at this time.

Recommendation:

1. That the Fendalton Advocacy team prepare a further report for the Fendalton/Waimairi Community Board's consideration on proposed layouts and expected development/operational costs, including the source of funds to develop the asset for a suitable Community Activity.
2. That the costs and benefits of a community use be compared with commercial uses for the building and be the subject of a comprehensive options report in accordance with the Property Decision Making Flowchart.